Detailed Discussion Of The References

U.S. Patent No. 5,606,690 (Hunter)

Independent claims Claim 1, 3, and 4 (and their dependent claims), recite a "deterministic FSA". Clearly, Hunter is teaching a non-deterministic automata as evidenced by the title, "Non-literal textual search using fuzzy finite non-deterministic automata".

Not only is Hunter non-deterministic but it is fuzzy (*i.e.* not exact). In order to more particularly point out the distinction between the present claims and the teachings of the '690 patent, claim 1 has been amended to include "exact" matching.

In rejecting claim 5, the examiner referred the applicant to portions of columns 13 and 16 of Hunter, however those particular areas do not disclose use of less than a complete set of bits as an offset into an array. In fact, the portion of column 13 that the examiner points is directed toward selection of a preference value which is used to designate whether a particular string has been selected or not. That has nothing to do with this claim limitation.

U.S. 5,455,932 (Major)

Major was used along with Hunter to reject claim 2, however, since claim 2 is dependent upon 1 and claim 1 is novel and non-obvious over the cited references based on the discussion above, there is no need to consider whether claim 2 should be deemed allowable. Even in combination, the references fail to teach a deterministic FSA as required by the claims.